

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-10 JUSE-00 NSAE-00

SNM-02 SY-05 TRSE-00 NSC-05 OES-03 OMB-01 SS-15 AID-05

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7649

DEA HQ WASHDC

INFO USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 4006

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, MX

SUBJ: ATTORNEY GENERAL'S FURTHER COMMENT ON NEW YORK TIMES
COVERAGE

S/NM FOR AMBASSADOR VANCE

DEA FOR ADMIN BARTELS

USIA FOR ILA

REF: MEXICO 3780; 3450 AND SUBSEQUENT

1. WHEN I SPOKE TO OJEDA ON APRIL 30 (MEXICO 3780), HE ALSO
RAISED THE MATTER OF THE NICHOLAS GAGE ARTICLE IN THE NEW
YORK TIMES AND SUBSEQUENT PUBLICITY HERE. HE STILL FELT VERY
STRONGLY ABOUT THIS MATTER, MAINTAINING THAT WHILE OUR RELATION-
SHIP HAD SURVIVED, THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT IT HAD UNDERGONE
A VERY GRAVE RISK. HE SPOKE WELL OF BOB EYMAN'S PERSONAL QUALI-
FICATIONS BUT SEEMED PARTICULARLY DISTURBED THAT EYMAN HAD BEEN
DESCRIBED BY THE TITLE OF "DIRECTOR IN MEXICO OF THE DRUG
ENFORCEMENT AGENCY". HE CONSIDERED THIS TITLE IN ITSELF ALMOST
PERJORATIVE AND HOPED THAT IT WOULD NEVER BE USED PUBLICLY. WHILE
HE WAS DOING EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO PLAY THIS INCIDENT DOWN, WE
STILL MAY NOT HAVE HEARD THE END OF IT AND THIS CONCERNED HIM
PARTICULARLY IN AN ELECTION YEAR. HE WAS CONCERNED AT POSSIBLE
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DANGERS IN FUTURE PRESS TREATMENT OF NARCOTICS EFFORTS IN MEXICO.

2. THE WHOLE TENOR OF OJEDA'S REMARKS WAS TO THE EFFECT THAT IT WAS FINE FOR U.S. AUTHORITIES TO PLAY UP OUR SUCCESSES ON THE AMERICAN SIDE OF THE BORDER BUT "PLEASE REPEAT PLEASE NOT TRY TO MAKE CAPITAL OF OUR JOINT EFFORTS SOUTH OF THE BORDER". IT SHOULD BE LEFT TO THE MEXICANS TO BLOW THEIR OWN HORN IN THEIR OWN COUNTRY AND IN HIS VIEW THERE WAS ENOUGH CREDIT TO GO AROUND.

3. COMMENT: IT WOULD BE WISE TO HEED OJEDA PAULLADA'S ADVISE. IN OUR GUIDELINES FOR DEA OPERATIONS WE STATE IN REGARD TO UNFORTUNATE INCIDENTS THAT, "SHOULD IT BE IMPOSSIBLE TO AVOID PUBLICITY, THE USG WILL ADHERE TO A POLICY OF NO COMMENT, LEAVING ANY STATEMENT TO THE MEXICAN AUTHORITIES". SIMILARLY IN REGARD TO ACCOMPLISHMENTS (AND INFERENTIAL CRITICISMS), IT IS PREFERENTIAL TO LET THE MEXICANS PLAY THE DRUMS.

4. IN KEEPING WITH THE ABOVE, I HAVE ISSUED THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS TO THE MISSION: ON THE SUBJECT OF GOM/USG NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT PROGRAMS, NO REPEAT NO PRESS INTERVIEWS OR RELEASES ARE TO BE MADE BY MISSION PERSONNEL. WE PLAN TO REFER ANY SUCH PRESS OR OTHER INQUIRIES TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF MEXICO, OR TO S/NM AND/OR TO DEA HQS WASHINGTON. WHILE WE HAVE NO DESIRE TO BE UNCOOPERATIVE WITH THE PRESS (WHICH HAS OFTEN GIVEN POSITIVE COVERAGE TO THE ANTI-NARCOTICS PROGRAM), WE NONETHELESS MUST RECOGNIZE AND CONFORM TO MEXICAN SENSITIVITIES IN THIS REGARD, AND WASHINGTON WOULD BE WISE TO DO THE SAME. (THIS MESSAGE HAS CONCURRENCE OF DEA/MEXICO; USIS AND OTHER MEMBERS OF MY STAFF).

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